



Good afternoon Senator Doyle, Representative Baram, and Members of the General Law Committee. My name is Dr. Chris Gargamelli and I am the Immediate Past-President of the CT Veterinary Medical Association. The CVMA includes the majority of Connecticut licensed veterinarians as its members. The CVMA supports HB 5474, An Act Exempting Veterinarians from the Electronic Prescription Drug Monitoring Program.

When veterinary practitioners were included in the Electronic Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, it is our belief that veterinarians were inadvertently included. With the desire to keep our members in compliance with the law, CVMA leaders met with Department of Consumer Protection in July, 2013. It was determined at that time that it would be very difficult for veterinarians to comply with the law mandating that information about every patient prescribed controlled drugs be entered into the Connecticut Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System. Mandatory fields for the system include: patient last name, patient first name, patient address, patient date of birth, and patient gender. Veterinary patients are animals and do not have first names or last names- they simply have a name. In regards to patient date of birth, for many animals the date of birth, including the year, is unknown. They carry no form of identification to confirm any information, including the identity of their owner. When veterinarians do try to comply with the Connecticut Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System the information they supply is inadequate and inadvertently not in compliance with the law.

The purpose of HB 5474 is to exempt veterinarians so that veterinarians will no longer be in violation of the law. We understand that "drug seeking" and "doctor shopping" for prescription narcotics are a problem in human patients. This problem does not occur in our veterinary patients. The prescription drug of most concern for abuse by people is OxyContin - this is rarely prescribed in veterinary medicine mainly due to of a lack of demonstrated efficacy due to poor absorption.

We urge you to vote in favor of HB 5474 so that veterinarians can once again be the law-abiding practitioners they desire to be.

Thank you,

Christopher Gargamelli, DVM
Immediate Past- President, CVMA

Eva Ceranowicz, DVM
Past President, CVMA

Government Affairs Committee Co-chairs